

2022-2023





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# 1.0 Message from the Chair

Message from Chairperson Dr. Paul Roumeliotis

As we start to emerge from the pandemic, it is clear that our community landscape has undergone significant transformation. Some silver linings are visible in the changes to ways Canadian families live, work, and study. For example, hybrid work environments have allowed families more flexibility with their time and choices while the leap in digitalization of information and services have increased access and opportunity. At the same time, the population is facing immense challenges such as increased levels of mental health issues, rising inflation, lack of housing, food insecurity, and increasingly devastating climate events. Families are struggling and in great need.

As always, Families Canada's members and all family support service providers across the country, have proven to be rays of hope and bastions of strength to their communities; with limited capacity and resources, they have and continue to respond with crucial support ranging from the provision of basic essentials to complex services such as mental health care.

In the past year, in partnership with the best in the field, Families Canada has continued our efforts to provide the support that our members, and the family support sector as a whole, need to do their best to meet the needs of families, particularly the most vulnerable. To this end, we have curated and created a number of resources specifically for service providers and families: our online store is now stocked with more than 400 evidence-informed resources, tailor-made for family support practitioners. This includes new resources on vaccine confidence building which contribute to the ongoing efforts against COVID19 and other illnesses, resources on intergenerational programming, financial literacy, parenting, and early childhood development.

We have also made professional development more accessible through e-learning and online learning events. For example, our new SAFE Women e-module was accessed by 100+ learners in just the first few weeks of its release. More much needed e-learning resources are in the works.

Over the past year, we laid the groundwork and have developed ambitious plans to better respond to emerging issues and gaps such as the need for more peer-exchange and networking, the impact of climate change, the short term and lasting impacts of the pandemic, and more.

Our new strategic plan, with inputs from our members and stakeholders, will be developed over the coming year. We will explore new and diverse cross-sectoral partnerships with an eye on sustainability and growth. A brandnew membership strategy will be developed with the purpose of being more relevant and responsive to specific needs of those on the frontline of services to families across Canada.

We also hope that with concentrated efforts on awareness and outreach, and even greater collaboration and networking, we will be able to raise the profile of the family support sector as an essential partner in national development. We look forward to working closely with our members, partners, funders, and friends, on the next chapter of our association.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis

Chair, Board of Directors

# 2.0 Our Team

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



Dr. Paul Roumeliotis

Randy St. Louis

René Ramirez Aguilar

**Marg Romanow** 

Lisa Gall

**Jennifer Gordon** 

## FORMER DIRECTORS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We would like to thank all our past Board Directors, staff, and volunteers for their valuable contributions in the previous year: Sherry McLean, Maria Khoushnood, Hilary Allen, Marisa Capano, Emily Kenny, Robert Brown, Mahesha Bandara, Kristi Carey, Grace Cao, Zoe Chen, Winny Peng, Clare Pama, Michael Andriescu, Latona Nicholson

# CURRENT STAFF & VOLUNTEERS



## Zindu Salih

President and CEO

## Rebecca Balcerzak

Director of Programs

# **Tola Fakolade**

## **Ledy Tredre**

Finance Officer

#### Jesica Santos

Membership and Administration Officer

#### **Bushra Rahman**

**Project Officer** 

## Taylor Jia

**Project Officer** 

#### **Peter Roumeliotis**

Marketing and Communications Manager

## **Kelly Stone**

Strategic Advisor

# 3.0 Vision and Mission Statement

VISION

A Canada committed to building strong families.





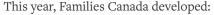
# 4.0 Initiatives

## 4.1 Financial Literacy

# SAFE Women (Safety and Financial Empowerment for Women)

**2021 – 2023 –** Funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada

Building our previous financial literacy work, this project addressed the need for trauma- and violence-informed approaches (TVIA) in financial literacy programming by developing a toolkit of TVIA resources and learning opportunities for financial literacy educators.



- 4 live webinars
- 4 training videos
- 4 infographics on TVIA and financial literacy education
- The SAFE Women e-learning module

These resources help equip financial literacy educators with tools to apply trauma- and violence-informed approaches to financial literacy education.



## Empowering Women Through Financial Education

2023 - 2024 - Funded by CIBC

This project focuses on empowering women living on low incomes by offering accessible seminars in family support centres to improve financial knowledge and confidence. The seminars address specific barriers to participation that women may face, by using trauma- and violence-informed approaches to program delivery.





## 4.2 Intergenerational Programming

Promoting Dementia Awareness in Intergenerational Programming in Canada 2023 - 2024 - Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada's Dementia Strategic Fund

Through this project, Families Canada will work with our valued partners, Council on Aging of Ottawa, Andrew Fleck Children's Services, and Eastern Ontario Health Unit, to reduce dementia stigma and increase the capacity of the family support sector to integrate dementia-inclusivity in intergenerational programming. The long-term outcome of this project is to integrate dementia awareness in intergenerational programs across Canada through the development of multimedia resources, capacity-building activities, and awareness campaigns.

The objectives of this project are to:

- Reduce dementia related stigma in intergenerational programs by conducting a nationwide awareness campaign targeting service providers, seniors, caregivers, and parents of young participants.
- Encourage and support communities to be more dementia inclusive through building knowledge, understanding, and skills in dementia-inclusivity among service providers of intergenerational programs in various settings such as family support, early learning, childcare and long-term care.

This project launched near the end of the 2022-2023 fiscal year. During that time, Families Canada established the Project Advisory Committee.

New Connections: Increasing Service Provider Capacity to Support Seniors' Digital Literacy 2022 – 2023 – Funded by Employment and Social Development Canada

To address today's reliance on technology and to support seniors to use their digital devices, Families Canada partnered with Connected Canadians to provide a free training program that gives tech-comfortable family support practitioners the skills to be confident and effective technology mentors for seniors and older adults.

Together, we provided staff at five family support centers across the country with free training to help seniors connect with others online and help to decrease the social isolation that so many seniors experienced during COVID-19.



By the end of the project, the five family support centers collectively:

- Created a weekly in-person programming that paired seniors with a family support practitioner to provide digital literacy support.
- Helped seniors complete online police record checks required for them to volunteer in intergenerational programming.
- Hosted group and individual sessions to teach older adults how to use tablets safely.
- Helped senior volunteers connect with each other through email and WhatsApp.
- Helped seniors use tablets to complete online forms.

"The training has given our organization new skills to help us support the families we work with better." **- Participant testimonial** 

## 4.3 Children's Rights

#### International and Canadian Child Rights Partnership

2021 - 2027 – Led by Toronto Metropolitan University

Under the leadership of Toronto Metropolitan University, the International and Canadian Child Rights Partnership (ICCRP) project embarked on a transformative multi-year research initiative, exploring the intricate relationship between children's rights to participation and protection. Through collaborative efforts involving researchers from various universities and institutions in Canada and worldwide, ICCRP aims to shed light on vital aspects of child well-being. Families Canada is a community partner contributing through expertise and knowledge mobilization to ensure that Canadian community perspectives are incorporated in all aspects of the project.

The initiative's objectives are to identify diverse perspectives on monitoring child participation in international protection, comprehend real-world challenges and successes in this realm, and delve into the connections between child and youth participation and protective outcomes.

# Mindful, Optimistic, Compassionate, Healing Innovations (MOCHI) for Climate Change Project

2022 - 2026 - Led by Carleton University

This project aims to tackle the paradoxical situation in which young people are seen as the future yet excluded from critical climate decision-making processes. The centerpiece of the initiative is the creation and evaluation of a social media campaign, tailored to enhance emotional resilience and wellbeing in the face of climate challenges. Families Canada is a partner on this innovative project, contributing our knowledge translation and mobilization expertise, especially as it applies to improving health, social, and economic outcomes for marginalized populations.

The project's objectives are to create a comprehensive evaluation of the emotional impact of climate change on youth and assess how effective social media can be in delivering mental health support within this context.

This project consists of an interdisciplinary team, uniting experts in children's rights, developmental psychology, education, and advocacy.

Under this partnership, Families Canada has initiated an assessment to understand the needs and gaps in the family support sector in responding to the impact of climate change.

## 4.4 Parenting

#### Supported Parents: Supportive Parenting

2018 - 2022 - Funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation

Families Canada supported minority-speaking language communities in Ontario by increasing parents and caregivers' parenting skills through the Nobody's Perfect parenting program. By the end of the project, we:

- Translated the Nobody's Perfect parent kits into Arabic, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese and Spanish
- Partnered with 29 family support centers across Ontario
- Trained 40 new bilingual program facilitators
- Provided 8,000 free Nobody's Perfect parent kits to family support centres
- Supported 871 parents/caregivers

We're proud to have worked with so many dedicated Nobody's Perfect facilitators who offered the program online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Testimonials from Parents:**

- "The Nobody's Perfect sessions were interactive and amazing. Through it, I learned how to be a better parent."
- "As a newcomer to Canada, the information that I have learned from the group is very helpful. Sharing parenting experiences in this group has helped a lot. Thank you all!"
- "I became more involved with my children as a result of *Nobody's Perfect* sessions."

#### Nobody's Perfect - Virtual Training Project

2022 - 2025 - Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nobody's Perfect parenting program (NPP) partners and Master Trainers have put great positive effort into adapting NPP parent group sessions and the NPP facilitator training program to a virtual environment. PHAC is now taking the opportunity to build upon this great work and support a short-term project that takes the next steps to further adapt the traditionally "in-person" facilitator training program into a new standardized, virtually delivered training program for new NPP facilitators. This standardized virtual facilitator training will be pilot tested and evaluated.



The objectives of this project are to:

- Identify gaps and needs in the current NPP program infrastructure and develop recommendations for addressing gaps and meeting these needs.
- Develop a more consistent NPP virtual facilitator training program that is equal to its inperson counterpart.
- Train more NPP facilitators online, taking advantage of the increased access/reach virtual delivery would offer.

This project launched near the end of the 2022-2023 fiscal year. During that time, important groundwork was laid in the establishment of the Project Advisory Committee and the beginning of conducting the program's needs assessment.





## 4.4 Parenting, CONT.

#### Early Childhood Development Webinar Series

Families Canada and the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development introduced a webinar series titled Early Childhood Development in Time of a Pandemic in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These webinars aim to address issues that children and families may face during this time, based on scientific evidence.

During this year, 2 webinars were released:

- Importance of Outdoor Play on Brain Development and Mental Health: This webinar focused on science-based information and strategies that support the positive impact of outdoor play on brain development and mental health in early childhood as well as for adults and educators alike.
- The Impact of Trauma on Young Children's Brain Development: This webinar focused on trauma, how
  it impacts child development, and how to best support children through sensitive interactions and
  interventions.

## **Participant Testimonials:**

- "The session was very helpful to understand how trauma impacts children. This information will help and guide how I will work with my high-risk families"
- "It was great, a very progressive approach to traumatized children! Thanks so much for providing the opportunity"

## Mental Health Supports for Perinatal People: A Needs Assessment of the Family Support Sector

2022 – 2023 – Funded by the Daymark Foundation

Families Canada is conducting a needs assessment to better understand the mental health requirements of new and expectant parents during the perinatal period. The primary objective is to enhance access to mental health support for vulnerable perinatal individuals within the family support sector.



#### Our goal is to:

- Engage with family support service personnel to better understand how providers perceive current services, programs and supports for perinatal people.
- Identify the unmet mental health support needs of perinatal people in order to shape future programs and initiatives.

This year, Families Canada collaborated with researchers and our advisory panel to define the methodology for the needs assessment. We also developed data collection tools and made significant strides in planning focus groups and surveys. By the project's conclusion, Families Canada will have produced a comprehensive environmental scan and needs assessment report for the family support sector.

## 4.5 Trauma- and Violence-Informed Approaches (TVIA)

Alliance against Violence and Adversity (AVA) Project 2022 – 2028 – Led by Calgary University



Under the leadership of the Calgary University, this project will establish the AVA Training Platform - a strategic endeavor aimed at enhancing community-based health and social services for girls, women, and gender-diverse people at risk or affected by a violence and adversity over the life-cycle, via a collaborative, innovative, cross-sectoral, inter-disciplinary, inter-jurisdictional training platform.

With the Alliance of Canadian Research Centres on Gender-Based Violence (ACRC), the platform connects trainees with mentors from academia and the community, focusing on gender and sex analysis. Families Canada is a community partner contributing through knowledge, mentorship, and advisory support to this transformative research to reshape health and social services delivery.

## 4.6 Social Inclusion of Newcomers

Engaging Newcomer Seniors in Programs

June 2021 - May 2022 - Funded by Ottawa Community Foundation

Each year, family support centres across Canada play an important role in welcoming newcomers and helping them get acquainted with their community. This year, Families Canada promoted our recently published resource "Five Strategies For Engaging Newcomer Seniors", which was pilot tested by 11 family support centres and 40 seniors in Ottawa.



Five Strategies for Engaging Newcomer Seniors

## 4.7 Additional COVID-19 Support to Members and Families

Increasing Vaccine Confidence through Enhancing Capacity of Family Support Service Providers

2021 - 2023 - Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada's Immunization Partnership Fund

This project aimed to increase the capacity of service providers in family support centers to promote COVID-19 vaccination, thereby improving demand for and access to COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines among vulnerable families they serve. This project was delivered in partnership with the Eastern Ontario Health Unit.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Educate service providers who have trusted relationships with vulnerable families
- Develop and disseminate tailored and culturally appropriate resources that improve vaccine literacy
  and promote positive messaging about COVID-19 vaccination to the families they serve.

Through this project a number of free, multi-lingual resources were developed including 4 webinars answering common vaccine-related questions and 9 tip sheets covering a variety of topics. Through the course of this project, we also worked with partner organizations to adapt, translate, and share downloadable resources.

## Reviewers' comments on the tip sheets:

- "The tip sheets are comprehensive and informative"
- "These tip sheets are a good source of vaccine information"



# **5.0** Funders and Partners

#### **Funders:**





Agence de la santé publique du Canada



Women and Gender Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada







Emploi et Développement social Canada



An agency of the Government of Ontario Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

#### Partners:



















# 6.0 New and Upcoming Resources

## **New Resources**

# Toolkit: Trauma- and Violence-Informed Resources

Families Canada developed a toolkit of trauma and violence-informed resources for financial literacy educators, which can be found at <a href="mailto:shop.familiescanada.ca">shop.familiescanada.ca</a>

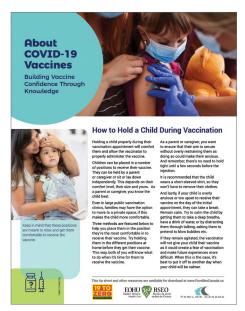
#### E-Module: SAFE Women

The new e-module "SAFE Women" helps financial literacy educators understand and apply trauma- and violence-informed approaches when supporting women. Accessible at training.familiescanada.ca

#### **Tip sheets: Vaccine Confidence**

**New:** a series of 9 tip sheets covering a variety of topics including different types of vaccines, making informed vaccine decisions, vaccination while pregnant and breastfeeding, the vaccination of children, how to improve the vaccine experience, and more! All tip sheets are available in English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, and Hindi. Check them out at: shop.familiescanada.ca





#### Webinars: Vaccine Confidence

With the support of Eastern Ontario Health Unit, Families Canada hosted a series of webinars answering common vaccine-related questions. In these webinars you will hear about the current status of vaccination in Canada, vaccination of children and pregnant people, how to approach conversations about vaccination, and more. Watch on our YouTube channel!

#### **UPCOMING**

#### **Needs Assessment: Perinatal Mental Health Supports for Perinatal People**

We look forward to sharing this much-needed needs assessment of the family support sector!

#### Report: Nobody's Perfect Needs Assessment

We will be conducting a needs assessment report for the Nobody's Perfect program.

#### e-Learning Module: Nobody's Perfect

With the guidance of *Nobody's Perfect* stakeholders, Families Canada will be developing a standardized virtual *Nobody's Perfect* facilitator training e-learning module.

#### **Webinars and Podcast Episodes: Dementia Awareness**

We will be hosting webinars and podcast episodes in English and French promoting dementia awareness in intergenerational programming in Canada.

#### **Tip Sheets: Dementia Awareness**

Families Canada will develop 8 tip sheets promoting dementia awareness in intergenerational programming in Canada.



## 7.0 Financial Report

These statements are an extract from the complete audited financial statements of Families Canada for the year ended March 31, 2023.

The auditor, Andrews & Co., has provided Families Canada with a clean audit opinion on the 2022-2023 Financial Statements.

# Project Funding and Government Contributions

Revenue from Project Funding and Government Contributions increased in 2023 vs. 2022 by \$196k, due to incremental grants from various sources received in the year. The key grants contributing to this increase include the Vaccine Confidence project, SAFE Women, etc.

## **Expenditures**

Expenditures increased in 2023 vs. 2022 by \$252k, which is a direct reflection of project funding increase vs. previous year. This increase in project funding

vs. previous year led to an increase in consulting expenses. The increase in publications revenue also led to an increase in publications related expenditures. The organization also took additional steps to reduce the impact of the higher expenditure by driving optimization of expenses in travel,

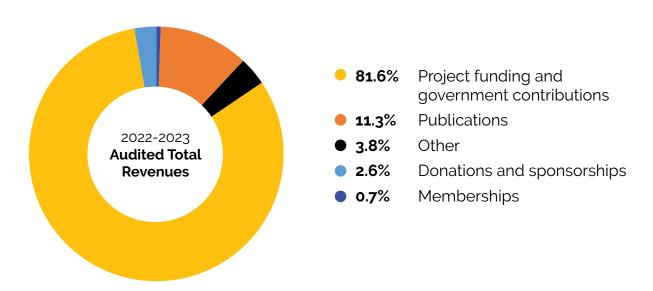
professional fees and other overhead expenses.

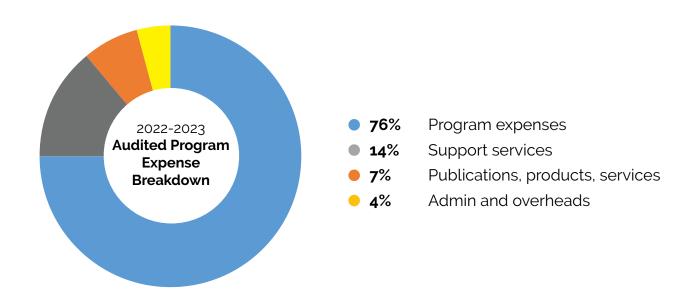
## **Contingency Fund**

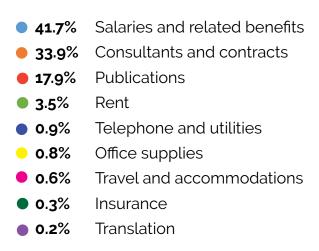
This year, the contingency fund closed at \$60k. This fund can only be used towards operations with the approval of the Board. As operations allow, the fund will be increased to an amount equal to 3-6 months of core expenses.

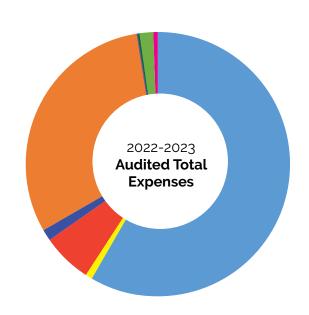
#### **Financial Information**

The year ended March 31, 2023, resulted in net expenses over revenue of (\$91,154), mainly due to delays in some expected grants.









# List of Donors

# We are thankful for the generous support of the following 2022-2023 donors:

- Canadian Western Bank
- Patricia West
- Sherry Zhao
- CIBC

We also thank the donors who wish to remain anonymous.

# Connect with Us

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Online Store: shop.familiescanada.ca

Training Portal: training.familiescanada.ca

